

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the entire Summary section of the specification as shown below, wherein the originally-filed Summary section encompassed the material from page 6, line 13 through page 12, line 23:

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention: a first aspect of a method is disclosed for playing a strategic board game wherein the game is played by two or more players on a game board that is gridded to designate spaces such that a quantity of pieces that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players are positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; the method comprising the steps of:—_requiring that the two or more players take turns for being an active player that is allowed to move one or more of the active player's pieces;—_allowing the active player to move or position the active player's pieces in a way that manipulates by pushing or pulling an opposing player's pieces, wherein the opposing player's pieces are pieces that belong to an opposing player that is one of the two or more players other than the active player; and wherein:—_pushing is a push move that comprises using a one of the active player's pieces to push a one of the opposing player's pieces out of a first space and into a second unoccupied space, and then moving the one of the active player's pieces into the first space; and—_pulling is a pull move that comprises moving a one of the active player's pieces out of a third space and into a fourth unoccupied space, and then using the one of the active player's pieces to pull a one of the opposing player's pieces into the third space.

According to the invention, theThe step of manipulating the opposing player's pieces further comprises the step of:—_using a one of the active player's pieces to freeze a one of the opposing player's pieces, thereby preventing movement of the one of the opposing player's pieces by the opposing player.

According to the invention, the first aspect of the method further comprisesFurther comprising the step of: providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece unfreezes or otherwise prevents freezing of the one piece.

According to the invention, 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the game board further comprises one or more spaces that are designated as trap spaces; and the first aspect of the

method further comprises the step of:—removing from the game a piece that is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces. The first aspect of the method even further comprises the step of 5. ~~The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:~~—providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece prevents removal of the one piece when the one piece is in a one of the one or more trap spaces.

According to the invention, the first aspect of the method further comprises6. ~~The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:~~—limiting the step of manipulating the opposing player's pieces such that a one of the active player's pieces manipulates only a one of the opposing player's pieces that is in a space that is adjacent to the one of the active player's pieces.

According to the invention, the first aspect of the method further comprises7. ~~The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:~~—assigning a type to each one of the quantity of pieces belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein there are at least two varieties of type;—predetermining a strength value for each one of the at least two varieties of type, wherein the strength value is selected from a hierarchy of strength values from weak to strong, such that when a first piece having a first type with a first strength value is compared to a second piece having a second type with a second strength value, if the first strength value is stronger than the second strength value, then the first piece is a stronger piece relative to the second piece which is a weaker piece relative to the first piece; and—allowing only stronger pieces to manipulate weaker pieces. Furthermore, -8. ~~The method of claim 7,~~ wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; ~~and the first aspect of the method further comprises the steps of:~~—assigning a first row, a second row, and a goal row for each one of the two or more players;—during the first turn of the game each active player ~~determines~~ determining an initial setup for the active player's pieces wherein the active player's pieces are arranged in the spaces within the active player's first row and second row; and—completing an instance of playing the strategic board game wherein one of the two or more players wins by being the first one of the two or more players to move a one of the winning player's weakest pieces to the goal row assigned to the winning player.

According to the invention, the first aspect of the method further comprises9. ~~The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:~~—during one turn, allowing the active player to move

or cause to move one or more of the pieces a total of one to four turn steps, wherein a turn step comprises a piece being moved from one space to any adjacent unoccupied space;—determining that a push move or a pull move uses two of the turn steps in a turn; and—requiring that a push move or a pull move must be completed within one turn. Furthermore, ~~10. The method of claim 9,~~ wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; and the first aspect of the method further comprises the step of:—defining adjacent spaces as spaces that are orthogonally adjacent, row-wise or column-wise.

According to the invention, the first aspect of the method further comprises~~11. The method of claim 1, further comprising~~ the step of:—requiring that a first push move or pull move must be completed before a second push move or pull move can be performed.

According to the invention, a~~12. A second aspect of a method is disclosed~~ for playing a strategic board game wherein the game is played by two or more players on a game board that is gridded to designate spaces such that a quantity of pieces that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players are positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; the method comprising the steps of:—requiring that the two or more players take turns for being an active player that is allowed to move one or more of the active player's pieces; and—allowing the active player to move or position the active player's pieces in a way that manipulates by using a one of the active player's pieces to freeze a one of the opposing player's pieces, thereby preventing movement of the one of the opposing player's pieces by the opposing player.

According to the invention, the second aspect of the method further comprises~~13. The method of claim 12, further comprising~~ the step of:—providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece unfreezes or otherwise prevents freezing of the one piece.

~~14. The method of claim 12, wherein~~According to the second aspect of the method of the invention, the step of manipulating the opposing player's pieces further comprises the steps of:—pushing or pulling an opposing player's pieces, wherein the opposing player's pieces are pieces that belong to an opposing player that is one of the two or more players other than the active player; and wherein:—pushing is a push move that comprises using a one of the active player's pieces to push a one of the opposing player's pieces out of a first space and into a second unoccupied space, and then moving the one of the active player's pieces into the first space; and—

pulling is a pull move that comprises moving a one of the active player's pieces out of a third space and into a fourth unoccupied space, and then using the one of the active player's pieces to pull a one of the opposing player's pieces into the third space.

According to the second aspect of the method of the invention, 15. The method of claim 12, wherein the game board further comprises one or more spaces that are designated as trap spaces; ~~and the method further comprises the step of:—~~ removing from the game a piece that is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces. The second aspect of the method even further comprises— 16. ~~The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:—~~ providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece prevents removal of the one piece when the one piece is in a one of the one or more trap spaces.

According to the invention, the second aspect of the method further comprises 17. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of:— limiting the step of manipulating the opposing player's pieces such that a one of the active player's pieces manipulates only a one of the opposing player's pieces that is in a space that is adjacent to the one of the active player's pieces.

According to the invention, the second aspect of the method further comprises 18. The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:— assigning a type to each one of the quantity of pieces belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein there are at least two varieties of type;— predetermining a strength value for each one of the at least two varieties of type, wherein the strength value is selected from a hierarchy of strength values from weak to strong, such that when a first piece having a first type with a first strength value is compared to a second piece having a second type with a second strength value, if the first strength value is stronger than the second strength value, then the first piece is a stronger piece relative to the second piece which is a weaker piece relative to the first piece; and— allowing only stronger pieces to manipulate weaker pieces. Furthermore, 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; and the second aspect of the method further comprises the steps of:— assigning a first row, a second row, and a goal row for each one of the two or more players;— during the first turn of the game, each active player determines—determining an initial setup for the active player's pieces wherein the active player's pieces are arranged in the spaces within the active player's first row and second row; and—

completing an instance of playing the strategic board game wherein one of the two or more players wins by being the first one of the two or more players to move a one of the winning player's weakest pieces to the goal row assigned to the winning player.

~~According to the invention, the second aspect of the method further comprises~~²⁰. The ~~method of claim 12, further comprising~~ the step of:—during one turn, allowing the active player to move or cause to move one or more of the pieces a total of one to four turn steps, wherein a turn step comprises a piece being moved from one space to any adjacent unoccupied space.

~~According to the second aspect of the inventive method,~~²¹. ~~The method of claim 20,~~ wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; ~~and the second aspect of the method further comprises the step of:—~~ defining adjacent spaces as spaces that are orthogonally adjacent, row-wise or column-wise.

~~According to the invention, a~~²². ~~A third aspect of a method for playing a strategic board game is disclosed~~ wherein the game is played by two or more players on a game board that is gridded to designate spaces such that a quantity of pieces that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players are positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; ~~the third aspect of the method comprising the steps of: —~~designating one or more spaces as trap spaces; and—removing from the game a piece that is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces.

~~According to the invention, the third aspect of the method further comprises~~²³. The ~~method of claim 22, further comprising~~ the step of:—providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece prevents removal of the one piece when the one piece is in a one of the one or more trap spaces.

~~According to the invention, a fourth aspect of a~~²⁴. ~~A method for playing a strategic board game is disclosed~~ wherein the game is played by two or more players on a game board that is gridded to form a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns such that a quantity of pieces that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players are positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; ~~the fourth aspect of the method comprising the steps of: —~~assigning a type to each one of the quantity of pieces belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein there are at least two varieties of type;—predetermining a strength value for each one of the at least two varieties of type, wherein the

strength value is selected from a hierarchy of strength values from weak to strong, such that when a first piece having a first type with a first strength value is compared to a second piece having a second type with a second strength value, if the first strength value is stronger than the second strength value, then the first piece is a stronger piece relative to the second piece which is a weaker piece relative to the first piece;—_assigning a first row, a second row, and a goal row for each one of the two or more players;—_requiring that the two or more players take turns for being an active player that is allowed to move one or more of the active player's pieces;—_during the first turn of the game, each active player ~~determines~~ determining an initial setup for the active player's pieces wherein the active player's pieces are arranged in the spaces within the active player's first row and second row; and—_completing an instance of playing the strategic board game wherein one of the two or more players wins by being the first one of the two or more players to move a one of the winning player's weakest pieces to the goal row assigned to the winning player.

According to the invention, a 25. A strategic board game apparatus for playing a strategic board game by two or more players is disclosed, the apparatus comprising:—_a game board that is gridded to designate an array of spaces;—_a quantity of pieces that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein the pieces can be positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; and—_one or more spaces that are identifiable as trap spaces for removing from the game a piece that is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces.

~~26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein:—~~ Further according to the invention, the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns. Furthermore,— ~~27. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein:—~~ _a type is assigned to each one of the quantity of pieces belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein there are at least two varieties of type;—_a strength value is predetermined for each one of the at least two varieties of type, wherein the strength value is selected from a hierarchy of strength values from weak to strong, such that when a first piece having a first type with a first strength value is compared to a second piece having a second type with a second strength value, if the first strength value is stronger than the second strength value, then the first piece is a stronger piece relative to the second piece which is a weaker piece relative to the first piece; and—_assigning a first row, a second row, and a goal row are assigned for each one of the two or more players;—_such that an

initial setup of pieces comprises positioning pieces within the first row and the second row, and an instance of the game is won by moving a designated type of piece to the goal row.

Other objects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent in light of the following description thereof.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claim set as shown below:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for playing a strategic board game wherein the game is played by two or more players on a game board that is gridded to designate spaces such that a quantity of pieces that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players are positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; the method comprising the steps of:

requiring that the two or more players take turns for being an active player that is allowed to move one or more of the active player's pieces;

allowing the active player to move or position the active player's pieces in a way that manipulates by pushing or pulling an opposing player's pieces, wherein the opposing player's pieces are pieces that belong to an opposing player that is one of the two or more players other than the active player; and wherein:

pushing is a push move that comprises using a one of the active player's pieces to push a one of the opposing player's pieces out of a first space and into a second unoccupied space, and then moving the one of the active player's pieces into the first space; and

pulling is a pull move that comprises moving a one of the active player's pieces out of a third space and into a fourth unoccupied space, and then using the one of the active player's pieces to pull a one of the opposing player's pieces into the third space.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of manipulating the opposing player's pieces further comprises the step of:

using a one of the active player's pieces to freeze a one of the opposing player's pieces, thereby preventing movement of the one of the opposing player's pieces by the opposing player.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:

providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece unfreezes or otherwise prevents freezing of the one piece.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the game board further comprises one or more spaces that are designated as trap spaces; and the method further comprises the step of:

removing from the game a piece that is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:

providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece prevents removal of the one piece when the one piece is in a one of the one or more trap spaces.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

limiting the step of manipulating the opposing player's pieces such that a one of the active player's pieces in a third space manipulates only a one of the opposing player's pieces in a fourth space provided that is in a the fourth space ~~that is adjacent to the one of the active player's pieces~~ third space.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

assigning a type to each one of the ~~quantity of~~ pieces belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein there are at least two varieties of type, and the varieties are at least visually distinguishable for all of the two or more players;

predetermining a strength value for each one of the at least two varieties of type, wherein the strength value is selected from a hierarchy of strength values from weak to strong, such that when a first piece having a first type with a first strength value is compared to a second piece having a second type with a second strength value, if the first strength value is stronger than the second strength value, then the first piece is a stronger piece relative to the second piece which is a weaker piece relative to the first piece; and

allowing only stronger pieces to manipulate weaker pieces.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7, wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; and the method further comprises the steps of:

assigning a first row, a second row, and a goal row for each one of the two or more players;

during the first turn of the game, each active player ~~determines~~ determining an initial setup for the active player's pieces wherein the active player's pieces are arranged in the spaces within the active player's first row and second row; and

completing an instance of playing the strategic board game wherein one of the two or more players wins by being the first one of the two or more players to move a one of the winning player's weakest pieces to the goal row assigned to the winning player.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
during one turn, allowing the active player to move or cause to move one or more of the pieces a total of one to four turn steps, wherein a turn step comprises a piece being moved from one space to any adjacent unoccupied space;

determining that a push move or a pull move uses two of the turn steps in a turn; and
requiring that a push move or a pull move must be completed within one turn.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; and the method further comprises the step of:

further defining adjacent spaces as spaces that are orthogonally adjacent, row-wise or column-wise.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
requiring that a first push move or pull move must be completed before a second push move or pull move can be performed.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for playing a strategic board game wherein the game is played by two or more players on a game board that is gridded to designate spaces such that a ~~quantity of pieces~~ that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players are positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; the method comprising the steps of:

requiring that the two or more players take turns for being an active player that is allowed to move one or more of the active player's pieces; and

allowing the active player to move or position the active player's pieces in a way that manipulates by using a one of the active player's pieces to freeze a one of the ~~an~~ opposing player's pieces, thereby preventing movement of the one of the opposing player's pieces by the opposing player; wherein the opposing player is one of the two or more players other than the active player.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of:
providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece unfreezes or otherwise prevents freezing of the one piece.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the game board further comprises one or more spaces that are designated as trap spaces; and the method further comprises the step of:

removing from the game a piece that is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:

providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece prevents removal of the one piece when the one piece is in a one of the one or more trap spaces.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of:

limiting the step of manipulating the opposing player's pieces such that a one of the active player's pieces in a third space manipulates only a one of the opposing player's pieces in a fourth space provided that is in a the fourth space ~~that is adjacent to the one of the active player's pieces~~ third space.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

assigning a type to each one of the ~~quantity of~~ pieces belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein there are at least two varieties of type and the varieties are at least visually distinguishable for all of the two or more players;

predetermining a strength value for each one of the at least two varieties of type, wherein the strength value is selected from a hierarchy of strength values from weak to strong, such that when a first piece having a first type with a first strength value is compared to a second piece having a second type with a second strength value, if the first strength value is stronger than the second strength value, then the first piece is a stronger piece relative to the second piece which is a weaker piece relative to the first piece; and

allowing only stronger pieces to manipulate weaker pieces.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; and the method further comprises the steps of:

assigning a first row, a second row, and a goal row for each one of the two or more players;

during the first turn of the game, each active player ~~determines~~ determining an initial setup for the active player's pieces wherein the active player's pieces are arranged in the spaces within

the active player's first row and second row; and

completing an instance of playing the strategic board game wherein one of the two or more players wins by being the first one of the two or more players to move a one of the winning player's weakest pieces to the goal row assigned to the winning player.

20. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of:

during one turn, allowing the active player to move or cause to move one or more of the pieces a total of one to four turn steps, wherein a turn step comprises a piece being moved from one space to any adjacent unoccupied space.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20, wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; and the method further comprises the step of:

further defining adjacent spaces as spaces that are orthogonally adjacent, row-wise or column-wise.

22. (Currently Amended) A method for playing a strategic board game wherein the game is played by two or more players on a game board that is gridded to designate spaces such that a ~~quantity of pieces~~ that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players are positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; the method comprising the steps of:

designating one or more spaces as trap spaces; and

removing from the game a piece that is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of:

providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece prevents removal of the one piece when the one piece is in a one of the one or more trap spaces.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for playing a strategic board game wherein the game is played by two or more players on a game board that is gridded to form a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns such that a ~~quantity of pieces~~ that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players are positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; the method comprising the steps of:

assigning a type to each one of the ~~quantity of pieces~~ belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein there are at least two varieties of type and the varieties are at least visually

distinguishable for all of the two or more players;

predetermining a strength value for each one of the at least two varieties of type, wherein the strength value is selected from a hierarchy of strength values from weak to strong, such that when a first piece having a first type with a first strength value is compared to a second piece having a second type with a second strength value, if the first strength value is stronger than the second strength value, then the first piece is a stronger piece relative to the second piece which is a weaker piece relative to the first piece;

assigning a first row, and a second row, and a goal row for each one of the two or more players, such that each player's goal row is the row that is farthest away from the player's first row and second row;

requiring that the two or more players take turns for being an active player that is allowed to move one or more of the active player's pieces;

during the first turn of the game, each active player ~~determines~~ determining an initial setup for the active player's pieces wherein the active player's pieces are arranged in the spaces within the active player's first row and second row; and

completing an instance of playing the strategic board game wherein one of the two or more players wins by being the first one of the two or more players to move a one of the winning player's weakest pieces to the goal row assigned to the winning player.

25. (Currently Amended) A strategic board game apparatus for playing a strategic board game by two or more players, the apparatus comprising:

a game board that is gridded to designate an array of spaces;

~~a quantity of pieces~~ that are identifiable as belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein the pieces can be positioned within, and moved among, the spaces; and

one or more spaces that are identifiable as trap spaces for removing from the game a piece that is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces.

26. (canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 26, ~~wherein~~ 25, further comprising:

a type that is assigned to each one of the ~~quantity of pieces~~ belonging to each of the two or more players, wherein there are at least two varieties of type and the varieties are at least visually distinguishable for all of the two or more players; and

a strength value that is predetermined for each one of the at least two varieties of type, wherein the strength value is selected from a hierarchy of strength values from weak to strong, such that when a first piece having a first type with a first strength value is compared to a second piece having a second type with a second strength value, if the first strength value is stronger than the second strength value, then the first piece is a stronger piece relative to the second piece which is a weaker piece relative to the first piece; such that:

a one player's piece is only allowed to manipulate weaker pieces that belong to an other one of the two or more players, wherein manipulation comprises one piece causing or preventing movement of another piece.

~~— assigning a first row, a second row, and a goal row for each one of the two or more players;~~

~~— such that an initial setup of pieces comprises positioning pieces within the first row and the second row, and an instance of the game is won by moving a designated type of piece to the goal row.~~

28. (New) The apparatus of claim 27, further comprising:

a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; and

a first row, a second row, and a goal row that are assigned to each one of the two or more players; such that:

a player's initial setup of pieces comprises the player positioning pieces belonging to the player within the player's first row and second row, and an instance of the game is won when the player moves a one of the player's pieces that is of a designated type to the player's goal row.

29. (New) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein:

the game board further comprises a rectangular array of sixty-four orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in eight rows and eight columns; and

the one or more trap spaces consist of four trap spaces, being spaces located at intersections of a third and sixth of the eight rows with a third and sixth of the eight columns.

30. (New) The method of claim 24, further comprising the steps of:

designating one or more spaces as trap spaces;

removing a piece from the game only when the piece is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces; and

providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece prevents removal of the one piece when the one piece is in a one of the one or more trap spaces.

31. (New) The method of claim 24, further comprising the steps of:

allowing the active player to move or position the active player's pieces in a way that manipulates an opposing player's pieces, wherein the opposing player's pieces are pieces that belong to an opposing player that is one of the two or more players other than the active player;

designating one or more spaces as trap spaces, and removing a piece from the game when the piece is moved into a one of the one or more trap spaces; and

providing means for any one of the two or more players to protect a piece that belongs to the one of the two or more players; such that protecting a one piece prevents removal of the one piece when the one piece is in a one of the one or more trap spaces.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising the steps of:

specifying a movement pattern for each type of piece wherein all movement patterns comprise stepwise movement from a first space to an unoccupied second space that is orthogonally adjacent to the first space;

limiting the step of manipulating the opposing player's pieces such that a one of the active player's pieces in a third space manipulates only a one of the opposing player's pieces in a fourth space provided that the fourth space is orthogonally adjacent to the third space;

during one turn, requiring the active player to move, or by means of manipulation cause to move, one or more of the pieces a total of one to four turn steps, wherein a turn step comprises a piece being moved from one space to any orthogonally adjacent unoccupied space; and

requiring that manipulation causing movement of the opposing player's piece must be accompanied within the same turn by corresponding causative movement by the active player's piece.

33. (New) The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of:

controlling an instance of playing the strategic board game by using time controls that comprise:

a turn time (M) that is the number of minutes:seconds allowed per active player's turn;

a player's reserve time (R) that is the number of minutes:seconds in a reserve maintained

for each of the 2 or more players, for allowing extra time for the active player's turn;

a percentage (P) that is the percent of unused turn time that is added to the reserve when the active player declares completion of the active player's turn;

a reserve limit (L) that is an upper limit for the number of minutes:seconds in the reserve;

a maximum turn time (T) that is the number of minutes:seconds within which the active player must complete the active player's turn; and

a game limit (G) that is the number of hours:minutes, or the number of turns, after which the instance of game playing is halted and the winner is determined by a scoring system; wherein:

the active player loses the instance of game playing whenever the active player fails to complete a turn within a total of the turn time plus the active player's reserve time (M+R), or within the maximum turn time (T), whichever amount of time is less; and

when the active player completes the turn in less than the turn time, then the remaining amount of turn time is added to the active player's reserve time as determined by multiplying the percentage (P) times the remaining turn time, the total time in the active player's reserve time being limited to the reserve limit.

34. (New) The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of:

using a scoring system to determine a winner for an incomplete instance of game playing, such that a one player having the highest Score is declared the winner, the scoring system comprising:

a Score tallied for each of the two or more players such that a player's Score equals a sum of Weakest-type Points (Rp) plus the product of Piece Points (P) times the sum of a Weakest-type Count (C) plus one, expressed in an equation as $\text{Score} = R_p + P \cdot (C + 1)$; wherein:

the Weakest-type Points equal a sum of cubed row values for each one of the player's weakest pieces, wherein each row value is a number assigned to the row to which the one of the player's weakest pieces has progressed, and the row value number assignments consist of sequential integers that increase from the integer 1 as rows are counted from the player's first row, having a row value of 1, to the player's goal row;

the Weakest-type Count equals the number of weakest pieces that the player has on the game board; and

the Piece Points equal a sum of piece type values for each of the pieces that the player has

on the game board, wherein the piece type values are predetermined and increase with the strength value of the type.

35. (New) The method of claim 6, wherein the game board comprises a rectangular array of orthogonally adjacent spaces arranged in rows and columns; and the method further comprises the step of:

further defining adjacent spaces as spaces that are orthogonally adjacent, row-wise or column-wise.

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 15-25, and 27-35 are now pending in the referenced application.

Preliminary amendments to the specification and claims are described in remarks hereinbelow.

Specification Amendments

Only the Summary section of the specification other than claims has been amended. The amendments to the Summary are mainly obvious correction of informalities such as removing claim numbering, reformatting to normal paragraph and sentence structure, and grammatical and punctuation modifications to adjust claim language to more readable summary text. For example, each claim set is referenced as a first, second, etc. aspect of the invention. Finally, certain words were amended in obvious corrections of grammatical or syntactical errors. For example, in the 14th paragraph, the word "determines" is replaced by the grammatically correct word "determining". For example, in several places the word "step" has been replaced by the word "steps" as dictated by the number of steps that follow. For example, in the next to last paragraph, a missing connecting word "and" is inserted, and the word "assigning" is replaced elsewhere in the sentence by the words "are assigned" in order to correct grammar and sentence structure. No new matter was introduced by the subject amendments for correcting informalities.

Claim Amendments

Preliminary amendments to the claims are made, as in the Summary section, such that certain words are amended in obvious corrections of grammatical or syntactical informalities. For example, in claims 8, 19, and 24 the word "determines" is replaced by the grammatically correct word "determining". For example, in claims 7 and 18 the word "step" has been replaced by the word "steps", as dictated by the number of steps that follow. No new matter was introduced by the subject amendments for correcting informalities.

Preliminary amendments to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification as follows.

In claims 1, 7, 12, 18, 22, 24, 25, and 27 the words "quantity of" or "a quantity of" are deleted wherever they qualify "pieces"; the changes being made to improve clarity of the claims, since "quantity of pieces" is generally understood to be a more verbose way of referring to "pieces" in the plural, and the actual *quantity* of pieces referred to is not the subject of these

claims.

Claims 6 and 17 are amended such that the limitation on manipulation is more clearly stated by means of clearly labeling (third space and fourth space) the adjacent spaces referred to in the claim.

Claims 7, 18, 24, and 27 are amended to further indicate that the different piece types are "at least visually distinguishable for all of the two or more players", as supported by page 14, lines 17-18 of the specification. It may be noted that this contrasts with the game of Stratego® wherein the piece types are visible to the owning player but not the opposing player.

Claims 10 and 21 are amended for added clarity by inserting the word "further" in a way that emphasizes that the claimed limitation on adjacent spaces as being *orthogonally* adjacent is more limiting than the previous claims concerning adjacent spaces, as supported by page 19, lines 1-3 and page 20, lines 13-14.

In claim 12, the wording is amended to correct precedence issues around the term "opposing player". The wording is copied from clause two of claim 1.

Claim 14 is cancelled in recognition that it is redundant of claim 2.

Claim 24, in addition to amendments discussed above, is amended to include a limitation on the meaning of the term "goal row", wherein this limited meaning is discussed in the specification on page 15, lines 17-22.

Claim 26, dependent on claim 25, is cancelled, the cancelled material being incorporated instead in new claims 28 and 29.

Claim 27, dependent on cancelled claim 26, is therefore amended to make it dependent on claim 25. Also, in addition to amendments discussed above, claim 27 is amended to delete clauses concerning row assignments and uses of those rows, the deleted material being incorporated instead in a new claim 28. Furthermore, the "wherein" language is changed to "further comprising" followed by grammatically appropriate inclusions of the word "that" in each of the following clauses. Furthermore, the clause about strength value is amended to add a "such that" limitation that is parallel to the last clause of claim 7 in combination with the definitions of manipulation that are provided in claims 1 and 2.

New claims 28-29 should be appended to the claims after claim 27.

New claim 28, depending from claim 27, contains text substantially copied from claims 26

and 27 as originally filed. In the text copied from claim 27, the word "assigning" is replaced elsewhere in the sentence by the words "are assigned" in order to correct grammar and sentence structure.

New claim 29, depending from claim 27, contains text substantially copied from claim 26, but further limited in terms of the quantities of spaces, rows and columns (page 15, lines 1-2, preferred embodiment). The second clause concerning trap spaces is supported by page 15, lines 13-14.

New claims 30-34 should be inserted in the claims after claim 24.

New claim 30, depending from claim 24, claims an added combination of trap space removal and means for preventing removal, according to elements of original claims 22 and 23.

New claim 31, depending from claim 24, claims an added combination of manipulation, trap space removal and means for preventing removal, according to elements of original claims 1, 2, 22 and 23. However, it must be noted that claim 31 uses the term "manipulation" in a less limited way than in either of claims 1 and 2. A more general understanding of manipulation is supported by the specification on page 17, lines 19-27.

New claim 32, depending from claim 31, claims an added combination of: movement patterns (supported by page 20, lines 10-15), limiting manipulation to orthogonally adjacent spaces (substantially copied from claim 6 or 17, with wording amended for clarity as described hereinabove), number of turn steps in a turn (claim 9), and limiting manipulation movement (page 20, lines 2-6).

New claim 33, depending from claim 32, claims an added step of controlling a game with time controls, as supported by the Time Controls section of the Detailed Description starting on page 28, line 1.

New claim 34, depending from claim 32, claims an added step of using a scoring system, as supported by the Scoring System section of the Detailed Description starting on page 29, line 30.

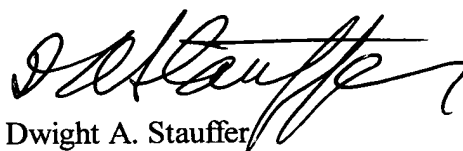
New claim 35 should be inserted in the claims after claim 6.

New claim 35, depending from claim 6, is a substantial copy of claim 10, with the word "further" added as discussed hereinabove concerning claim 10.

Conclusion

Preliminary amendments are described including obvious informality corrections to the Summary section, and claim amendments that are supported by the specification as originally filed. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been introduced by said preliminary amendments.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Stauffer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dwight A. Stauffer
Patent Agent
Registration No. 47,963

Dwight A. Stauffer
D.A. Stauffer Patent Services LLC
1006 Montford Rd.
Cleveland Heights, OH 44121
Voice: (216) 691-0272
Fax: (216) 381-6599

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